



West of England Partnership

Bath & North East
Somerset Council



North
Somerset
COUNCIL

South Gloucestershire
Council

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WEST OF ENGLAND PARTNERSHIP JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 3rd JULY 2009 AT 10.00AM

Members of the Joint Committee

Bath and North East Somerset

- P Councillor Eleanor Jackson
- P Councillor Caroline Roberts
- P Councillor Martin Veal

Bristol City Council

- P Councillor Steve Comer
- P Councillor Mark Bradshaw
- P Councillor Barbara Lewis

North Somerset Council

- P Councillor Tony Moulin
- P Councillor David Pasley
- P Councillor Clive Webb

South Gloucestershire Council

- P Councillor Pat Hockey
- A Councillor Geoff King
- A Councillor Ian Smith
- P Councillor Colin Hunt (substituting for Councillor Smith)

WEPJSC

1.7/09

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Geoff King and Councillor Ian Smith.

**WEPJSC
2.7/09**

ELECTION OF CHAIR FOR 2009/10

The Chair of the Joint Committee, Councillor Lewis commented that she did not intend to stand for the office of Chair again this year.

She proposed that in order that there could be a more open approach to the election of Chair, members should move and second the names of their preferred candidates in the normal way.

Candidates should then give a one minute presentation on the reasons why they should be elected chair

A secret ballot should then take place - each member to write down on a slip of paper, the initials of their preferred candidate which would then be collected up and counted by the clerk to the meeting.

The names of Councillors Hockey and Bradshaw were duly moved and seconded. Presentations were made by each member and their names entered into the ballot.

On being counted by the clerk, the result was duly announced and it was;

RESOLVED - that Councillor Bradshaw be elected Chair of the West of England Partnership Joint Scrutiny Committee for the 2009/10 municipal year.

**WEPJSC
3.7/09**

ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR FOR 2009/10

The names of Councillors Hockey, Veal and Webb were duly moved and seconded. Presentations were made by each member and their names entered into a ballot as per the process described above.

The outcome of the voting was declared by the clerk. Councillor Veal, having the lowest number of votes, withdrew at the end of the first ballot.

A second ballot then took place. The result was duly announced and it was:

RESOLVED - that Councillor Webb be elected Vice-Chair of the West of England Partnership Joint Scrutiny Committee for the 2009/10 municipal year.

**WEPJSC
4.7/09**

MEMBERSHIP

The Partnership Chief Executive invited the Joint Committee to consider how it wished to engage with its social, economic and environmental partners (SEEP's) during the year.

Members considered that to require them to attend every meeting would not be consistent with the Joint Committee's aim to focus on fewer topics in greater depth. There was also concern that the Joint Committee might be used as a platform for promoting particular agendas by specific partners .

After discussion, it was agreed that appropriate SEEPs and other key stakeholders should be invited to the meeting when items relevant to their area of activity came up for discussion - and they would be engaged in an expert witness capacity.

RESOLVED - that membership of the West of England Partnership - Joint Scrutiny Committee as set out on the agenda paper be noted.

**WEPJSC
5.7/09**

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members discussed the terms of reference for the Joint Committee.

It was agreed that the Joint Committee work programme should not simply be driven by the executive's agenda and that it needed to adopt a more pro-active role, focussing on the specific areas in which it was interested.

It was also agreed that some form of review of activities was necessary at the end of 2009/10 examining the Joint Committee's achievements and outcomes in its first 2 years of operation.

RESOLVED - (1) that the terms of reference for the West of England Partnership - Joint Scrutiny Committee for the 2009/10 municipal year be noted;

(2) that the following additional term of reference be added :

“from time to time, to identify specific issues which the Committee wants to further investigate”

and

(3) that the Committee reviews its activities and achievements over the past 2 years, at the end of 2009/10.

WEPJSC

6.7/09

DATES OF MEETINGS 2009-10

RESOLVED - that the West of England Partnership - Joint Scrutiny Committee meets on the following dates in 2009/10 commencing at 10.00 a.m.:-

2009

**Friday 4th September @ Frys, Keynsham
Friday 30th October @ BAWA, Filton
Friday 11th December @ The Campus,
Weston-Super-Mare**

2010

**Friday 22nd January @ Bristol Council
House
Friday 5th March @ The Guildhall, Bath**

WEPJSC

7.7/09

**MINUTES - WEST OF ENGLAND PARTNERSHIP - JOINT
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 13TH MARCH 2009**

RESOLVED - that the minutes of the meeting of the West of England Partnership - Joint Scrutiny Committee held on 13th March 2009 be

confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Arising therefrom, specific reference was made to:

- MAA – the Chief Executive reported on negotiations with civil servants about the key asks of the sub-region. The MAA was currently at Cabinet Committee stage and it was anticipated that it would be signed off on or about 14 July. He agreed to circulate the latest draft to members
- Investment in rail – Councillor Gerrish reported that Cabinet members from the WEP authorities had met with the Minister to press the Partners case for more investment in local rail infrastructure and services. Meetings had also taken place with representatives from key sectors of the rail industry

**WEPJSC
8.7/09**

PUBLIC FORUM

There was no public forum business.

Members discussed how to better inform the public of the meetings of the JSC and increase awareness of the Committee's role.

The Chief Executive undertook to arrange of the WEP Press Officer to meet/consult with the Chair and Vice Chair on the best way forward.

It was agreed that press releases prior to meetings of the JSC might be one way of attracting public attention. Councillor Veal indicated that in his experience, local radio was a most useful means of keeping people informed as to what was going on and focus on this form of media would probably be worthwhile.

**WEPJSC
9.7/09**

PRESENTATION BY CHAIR OF WEP JOINT TRANSPORT COMMITTEE

The Joint Committee received a presentation by the Chair of the West of England Partnership Joint Transport Committee, Councillor Charles Gerrish.

The following is a summary of the main issues raised by members during and after the presentation:

- Concerns were expressed about the ability of existing infrastructure to support the planned expansion at Avonmouth in terms of refuse disposal, power generation and new warehousing. A range of measures would be necessary including the construction of a new interchange on the M49
- North Somerset were experiencing difficulties in establishing a dialogue with the Highways Agency on issues relating to Avonmouth expansion. The Eon proposal for a new wood burning power station would have major implications for junction 19 on the M5 in terms of fuel which was delivered by road. A review of the rail options for the delivery of fuel for the power station was also necessary
- There was a clear need to develop an understanding between the Partnership and the Agency and for ongoing discussions on a range of issues. It would be useful to try and arrange for senior Highways Agency officials to attend a scrutiny meeting. Councillor Gerrish indicated that they were coming to an executive committee meeting in October, to which members of the JSC were welcome to attend.
- Rail infrastructure issues were another area where an ongoing dialogue was needed – and this had a direct impact on planned development. Councillor Gerrish explained that there had been discussions with the Minister responsible, who had taken on board, the concerns about signalling previously raised.
- It was noted that Cardiff were keen to work with the Partnership on issues regarding electrification of the Paddington to Bristol & Cardiff main line. Consultation was currently planned and the Chief Executive would be involved in a meeting of interested parties to take place shortly.
- It was important for there to be a more joined up approach between consideration of strategic planning issues at Partnership level, and local planning issues which arise via partner authorities development control processes. The Partnership needed to be made aware as soon as possible, of any major local development application which could have sub-region wide implications.
- The Chief Executive commented that in his view arrangements were reasonably joined up already, as

strategic planners and development control planners tended to work cross boundary. By way of an example, in the Joint Waste Strategy, the partner authorities heads of planning were the key officers for the project, working with 2 spatial planners from the WEP office.

- A member enquired as to the arrangements for logging the key transport infrastructure assets in the region (in a similar way to the railway land asset register previously reported). Councillor Gerrish indicated that the Partnership was reliant on the information which was tendered by partner authorities to ensure that it had accurate records.
- Members discussed the need for closer working between the Joint Transport Committee and the Planning, Housing and Communities Board, in view of overlapping issues and the need for scrutiny engagement. Councillor Gerrish commented that input from the JSC on issues being discussed by the Board would be welcomed.

- RESOLVED -**
- (1) that Councillor Gerrish be thanked for his presentation, and**
 - (2) that copies of the overheads used in the presentation be circulated to JSC members.**

**WEPJSC
11.7/09**

JOINT LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 3

The Joint Committee considered a report of the West of England Partnership Transport Policy Group Leader (agenda item no. 5(b)) informing members of and seeking views on proposals to produce the replacement Joint Local Transport Plan.

Following a brief presentation, members discussed a range of issues and the following is a summary of the main points raised:

- Noting the period of the JLTP3 was from 2011 onwards, a member queried how that period coincided with funding streams for RFA1 project delivery and RFA2 activities. It was explained that the JLTP process would specify grounds for the funding of projects during its currency, but care would need to be taken in schemes covered by the period prior and funding for longer term projects beyond the scope of JLTP3.

- More information was needed about how plans for housing development and funding of the supporting infrastructure fitted together with the JLTP funding programme up to 2026.
- It was noted that climate change was listed as a key area of work within JLTP3 but a member wondered how the impact of projects on climate change would be quantified. Specifically what were the targets and how would they be measured.

The officer explained that the Government were keen that JLTPs demonstrated on a sub-regional basis, the impact which the proposals within them would have on air quality and carbon reduction. The Partnership had limited experience in this area so it would be necessary to engage specialist consultants to review the programme at appropriate stages.

- A member asked that information also be provided on the penalties which would be imposed if the carbon emission targets with the JLTP are not met
- A member queried the timescale for JLTP3 – was a 15 year programme appropriate or would it encourage short term fixes for matters which would benefit from a longer term approach ? 2050 might be a more appropriate planning horizon or even 2100.

The officer responded that 2026 was the suggested time span for the plan at the moment and was one which appeared to have the support of most members.

- Regarding concerns about possible overlap of partner authorities scrutiny work programmes with that of the Partnership, the Chief Executive indicated that the “single conversation” process with individual authorities would endeavour to ensure that they were kept abreast of current and evolving issues. It might be appropriate for individual authority scrutiny bodies to then look in more depth at the impact on the sub-regional plan on the authority concerned.
- A member expressed concern about the timing of major public consultation on JLTP3 proposals because the July to September period was a holiday period.

It was explained that the timing was down to the timescales set by Government for preparation of the Plan.

After further discussion, it was:

RESOLVED - that the report be noted and that the Joint Committee have an ongoing involvement in the preparation of the JLTP3.

**WEPJSC
12.7/09**

THE PARTNERSHIP'S EXECUTIVE WORK PROGRAMME IN 2009/10 AND PREPARING A JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME - 2009/10

The Chief Executive presented a paper on the Partnership's work programme (circulated as item 6, Appendix B) and discussed the key issues which the Partnership's respective joint committees and boards would need to deal with during 2009/10. The JSC also considered the wider scrutiny issues discussed in the report on the Joint Scrutiny Committee work programme (item 6 refers).

Arising from the presentation, and in considering how the JSC's own work programme for 2009-10 might be organised, members raised a range of issues and the following is a summary:

- A way would need to be found to better engage with members in the single conversation process on the JLTP. In particular, member concerns about the impact of the housing targets for the sub-region and how the Plan needs to respond, should be factored in to the process
- The Partnership arrangements should not prevent component authorities from targeting funding on their own priorities. Local economic considerations should be brought to the fore in the Partnerships work programme, in the light of the present recession
- For the scrutiny process to be effective, the JSC needed to be able to react and input to developing situations as well as react to issues already considered by the executive. The approach at the moment was focussed on "overview" The JSC needed to be able to scrutinise issues of its choosing before they were presented to the relevant WEP Board. This would require the Partnership's executive work programme to be set out in a clear and concise way

- A way needed to be found of approaching themes in a more cross cutting way (as opposed to a silo centred approach – waste, transport etc)
- Public engagement and involvement needed to feature more prominently in JSC process, and mechanisms needed to be put in place to take issues of concern forward in a timely and flexible manner
- The JSC could usefully be engaged in the West of England conference on 27 November – to highlight its role and explaining the issues which it was scrutinising this year.
- The JSC ought to scrutinise the WEP core strategy at its next meeting as one of the key items of work for the year
- The Chair reminded members that in setting the work programme, they needed to focus on issues at a sub-regional level and issues derived from the Partnership's core strategy.
- The Chair suggested that the agenda for each JSC meeting might be formed of 2 sections in future – (A) consideration of a theme (determined by the JSC) and (B) detailed consideration of key issue(s) (as determined by Partnership's (executive) work programme)
- Following the presentation by Councillor Gerrish, it was suggested that the next meeting should receive a presentation from the Chair of the WEP Planning, Housing and Communities Board.
- A paper on promoting the JSC agenda and a communication strategy would be useful.
- When the JSC work programme was agreed, consideration should be given also to which SEEPs should be invited to respective meetings as expert witnesses

After further discussion, it was:

RESOLVED - (1) that, taking into consideration the issues and items now suggested, it be agreed that the Chair consult with colleagues and

circulate for members consideration, a draft scrutiny work programme for the year

(2) that the Chief Executive bring to the next meeting, details of the WEP'S executive work programme

(3) that the Chair of the WEP Planning, Housing and Communities Board be invited to give a presentation to the next meeting

(4) that the core strategy be considered at the next meeting.

(The meeting ended at 1:15 pm)

CHAIR